

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/801,366

Examiner

Scott L. Jarrett

Applicant(s)

YOUNG ET AL.

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to July 22, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-2, 12-13 and 17-18.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is responsive to Applicant's amendment filed July 22, 2005. Applicant's amendment amended the specification, claims 1-2 and 12-13, canceled claims 3-11 and 14-16 and added new claims 17-18. Currently claims 1-2, 12-13 and 17-18 are pending.

Response to Amendment

2. Applicant's amendments filed July 22, 2005 with respect to pending claims 1-2, 12-13 and 17-18 overcomes the following objections/rejections cited in the First Office Action, dated March 22, 2005:

- The objection to the Specification cited in the first office action is withdrawn in response to Applicant's amendment to the Title.

- The USC 112 (2) rejection of claims 1-4 and 10-14 cited in the first office action is withdrawn in response to Applicant's amendments to claims 1-2 and 12-13 and the cancellation of claims 3-4 and 10-11.

- The USC 101 rejection of Claims 1-3 and 10-13 cited in the first office action is withdrawn in response to Applicant's amendments to claims 1-2 and 12-13 and the cancellation of claims 3 and 10-11.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments, see pages 7-8, filed July 22, 2005, with respect to 1-2, 12-13 and 17-18 have been fully considered and are persuasive.

It is noted that the applicant did not challenge the Official Notice(s) cited in the First Office Action therefore those statements as presented are herein after prior art. Specifically it has been established that it was old and well known in the art at the time of the invention:

- that any identification approach (search strategy, review pattern, etc.) that compared tasks (activities, milestones, etc.) amongst a plurality of projects (workflows, WBS, etc.) would be capable of identifying new items to be added or removed from the consolidated projects resulting in a substantially minimized work breakdown structure and related workflow;
- to consolidate and/or minimize tasks (workflows, activities, processes) by adding, removing or combining tasks;
- to include/associated files (documents, etc.) with activities/tasks; and
- to include sample documents, help files, tool tips, or the like (instructional content) as part of a project management and/or workflow system.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

The present invention is directed to a method and system for *automatically* integrating (synthesizing) an original/controlling project work breakdown structure and its related workflows with another work breakdown structure/workflow wherein the user selects, from a library, a work breakdown structure/workflow to be integrated in to an original/controlling WBS/workflow and then the system *automatically* removes already existing (redundant) tasks/activities and adds missing (not present) tasks/activities and their associated activity/task dependencies to the original/controlling WBS/workflow.

The closest prior art Microsoft Project 2000 and Scitor Project Scheduler 4 fail to teach or suggest either singularly or in combination *automatically* integrating an existing/controlling work breakdown structure and workflow with another work breakdown structure and workflow as recited in independent Claims 1 and 12.

Microsoft Project 2000 teach a project management system and method that enables users to manually integrate/synthesize two or more project plans (workflows) and their associated work breakdown structures however Microsoft Project 2000 fails to teach *automatically* identifying the most downstream activity/task in the existing/controlling workflow; *automatically* determining whether each activity already

Art Unit: 3623

exists in the project WBS; and *automatically* adding any activity/task and its associated dependencies as recited in independent Claims 1 and 12.

Scitor Project Scheduler 4, as evidenced at least by Ramsus, Daniel, Project Schedule 4 (1991), teaches a project management system and method for managing project workflows and their associated work breakdown structures wherein users can manually link and combine multiple projects into consolidated projects based on the workflows' work breakdown structures (Page 1, Last Paragraph; Page 2, Paragraph 4) however Scitor Project Scheduler 4 fails to teach *automatically* identifying the most downstream activity/task in the existing/controlling workflow; *automatically* determining whether each activity already exists in the project WBS; and *automatically* adding any activity/task and its associated dependencies as recited in independent Claims 1 and 12.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Diamant et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,530,861, teach a project management system and method for managing multiple projects comprising generating project plans (workflows) using a common set of task/activity templates wherein the templates are represented as objects/classes.

- Harmon et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,563,994, teach a project management system and method for generating project plans wherein the system guides the user through a series of questions/inquiries and based on the information provided automatically selects/adds tasks and their associated dependencies to the project plan.

- Miller, Neil, U.S. Patent No. 6,101,481, teaches a project task/activity management system and method wherein project/task workflows/task breakdown structures are generated utilizing templates. Miller further teaches that the tasks (tasks, sub-tasks, task details, etc.) can be manually combined/merged into other tasks.

- Hitachi, LTD, JP 2000-200308A, teaches a project management system and method wherein the system utilizes and relates several work breakdown structures to perform project management activities such as monitoring the progress of a project.

- Spence, Bruce, Integrated Project Numbering System (1990), teaches the old and well-known generation and utilization of work breakdown structures as an essential project management tool (technique). Spence further teaches utilizing work breakdown structures for generating a project numbering system.

- Mansuy, John, Work Breakdown Structure (1991), teaches the old and very well known generation and use of work breakdown structures in project management. Mansuy further teaches that work breakdown structures provide a framework for dividing projects into manageable units (work packages, activities, etc.).

- Parviz, Rad, Advocating a deliverable-oriented work breakdown structure, teaches the generation of standard (baseline, templated, generalized, etc.) work breakdown structures wherein the standardized work breakdown structures are grouped (integrated, synthesized) and modified (i.e. "appropriate segments need to be selected and modified") in order to generate project plans from a common framework (common skeleton).

- Mueller, Stephen, Resolving Work Breakdown Structure Problems, teaches creating standard work breakdown templates (standardized WBS) in order to assist in the management of multiple projects. Mueller further teaches that the standardized work breakdown structures are swappable and sortable.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.


Art Unit: 3623

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



SJ

10/14/2005



TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY
TECHNICAL